

Approved

## HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COMMISSION

### Minutes of Special Meeting

January 19, 2013

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Commissioners Present: Phil Bunick, Wes Shorts, Ginny Gingras, and Deanna Chvatal

Staff Liaisons: Marina Rodriguez, VSS and Alan Slobodien, VYS

Absent: Judy Hany, Bill Fox

#### Agency Interviews were held as follows:

##### - Hockanum Valley Community Council

David Engelson, Chief Executive Officer, reviewed the programs included in the application and answered questions. *Counseling* is program most in need of additional funds; they charge on a sliding scale; receive reimbursement from Medicare, Medicaid but not much private insurance; cost of service varies depending on who the client sees (therapist social worker, aide); Commission would like to know how many Vernon clients are not covered by any insurance; next year the Commission may want to use its funds as the payer of last resort to help pay for those not covered. *Transportation* (Dial-a-Ride) increased fee to \$2 per ride to help defray cost of service; TOV provides the required match for the State grant based on formula and the match is part of the application; the new van purchase is excluded from this application as Town Council previously decided that it would cover it separately. *Basic Services* includes the food pantry which has experienced very high demand this year increasing by over 1,000 families and individuals. *Elderly Outreach & Management* serves homebound elderly and has many volunteers who help with this service.

##### - Community Child Guidance Clinic

Clifford Johnson, Executive Director, reviewed the programs included in the application and answered questions. The Clinic is the largest mental health provider for youth east of the river working to keep kids in the community and out of facilities; they have purchased the old Buckland School in E. Middle Turnpike and are in the process of renovating it in order to expand their programs where there is increased demand; developing autism treatment program for kids and adolescent substance abuse services; increasing capacity at their special school in their existing building when other programs move to the new building; their primary source of client referrals are schools that cannot handle disruptive students; the closure of New Hope Manor is expected to increase demand for services; cost of service is reimbursed through client insurance; Commission would like to know how many Vernon clients are not covered by any insurance; next year the Commission may want to use its funds as the payer of last resort to help pay for those not covered; created new Development Officer position to engage in more extensive fundraising; they focus on providing programs that no other agency offers for kids

such as services for sexually abused minors, eating disorders, home-based services, psychiatric staff who can provide medication and evaluations.

- Tri County ARC

Lynn Sherman, Program Manager, reviewed the program and answered questions. Things have settled since they took over the former Hockanum Industries a year ago; there are 51 clients from the former Hockanum Industries who continue to participate; about 31 are Vernon residents; activities include a Social Group, Hale St. work site, and Greenhouse work site; the grant funds are used for social and recreational activities that the Social Group provides, transportation to and from activities and work sites, and to cover a portion of staff coverage; the Hale St. property has been renovated; they've added lawn care and snow removal to the work site and sustained the existing operations such as shredding and indoor maintenance; the Commission suggested they may want to consider developing a social group for parents as a means of promoting camaraderie and support for parents.

**Review of Grant Applications and Funding Recommendations**

The Commission reviewed grant applications and deliberated on proposed allocations. The Commission acknowledged it must try to hold the bottom line due to the tight budget. And it worked to maintain the current level of funding. The Commission unanimously agreed on funding recommendations to the Mayor as follows:

• Community Child Guidance Clinic	\$11,000
• CT. Legal Services	\$4,500
• KidSafe	\$8,000
• Interval House	\$2,500
• HVCC	\$165,000
• Hockanum Valley School Readiness	\$4,000
• MARC	\$4,000
• NCRMHB	0
• Shelter Services	
Tri Town Shelter	\$4,500
Cornerstone	\$3,700
Family Placements	\$6,000
• Tri County ARC	\$7,000
• VNA	\$12,249
• YW Sexual Assault Services	\$2,000
TOTAL	\$234,449

The Commission considered a different use for the Family Placements grant, which is unspent this year. Any change of use would be discussed with the Mayor first. The Commission discussed whether it would be more cost effective for the Town to own the Dial-a-Ride vans(s). The Commission discussed being the “payer of last resort” for Vernon clients who are not covered by health insurance for clinical services; and having them provide data on the uninsured for next year.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by  
Marina Rodriguez